In 1981 Dr. Robert Ruckman was hired as a fulltime member of the Music department and was awarded the rank of tenured professor in 1987. Dr. Ruckman became chair of the department in 1987, a position he held until his retirement. It was during Dr. Ruckman’s early years at Sinclair that many of the current music major offerings were created. He helped design course offerings throughout his tenure, whether it was an elective course such as Jazz Improvisation, or new required courses like Conducting Fundamentals and Introduction to Music Education, or an Ohio transfer module course like World Music. Under his guidance, the music faculty taught, courses for music majors, for the general student population, and for personal interest students living in the region. It was under his leadership that the Music department began a strategic pre-assessment mentoring and advising system for music majors. As department chair and as a teacher, Dr. Ruckman created opportunities for students to perform in public. He helped to schedule and coordinate dozens of performances by music students each academic year.

He received both the Bachelor of Music and Master of Music degrees in piano performance from The Juilliard School. He later earned the Doctor of Musical Arts degree in piano performance from the University of Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music. Dr. Ruckman, with his wife Tiraje, as the Ruckman Duo performed as pianists around the world – from the Dayton Chamber Music Society to the Cemal Resit Rey Pavilion in Istanbul Turkey. From National Federation of Music Clubs festivals to World Piano Invitational competitions to concerto competitions at Wright State University and University of Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music, he was sought after as a respected adjudicator for many music competitions. He was very active in community music relations while teaching fulltime at Sinclair. For many years Dr. Ruckman served as a board member of the Dayton Philharmonic Orchestra and was chair of many of the board’s committees. He was also a board member of the Dayton Bach Society, the Miami Valley Academy of Music and the Montgomery County Arts and Cultural District.

Throughout his tenure at Sinclair, Dr. Ruckman continued his professional growth with his training to become an evaluator for the National Association of Schools of Music (NASM) He served as a commissioner on NASM’s Commission on Accreditation for six years and presented sessions at several NASM national conferences. Additionally, he successfully led the department through two subsequent accreditation visits in 2004 and in 2014. He was very helpful in assisting and guiding Sinclair’s Art and Design department and the Theatre and Dance department in their initial accreditation efforts.

Whether it was in the classroom, conference room, board room, or on the concert stage Dr. Robert Ruckman represented Sinclair Community College as an exemplary teacher, administrator, musician, and artist. He is most deserving of Professor Emeritus status.